

# Unlocking Marketing Potential

*AngusLink can help Angus seedstock breeders' commercial customers add value to their calves.*

*by Holly Martin, American Angus Association*

At the beginning of the year, two of the American Angus Association commercial programs merged into one reimagined brand, AngusLink<sup>SM</sup>. The program allows commercial cattlemen to enroll their calves in a Process Verified Program (PVP) of their choice and add a genetic merit score on Angus-sired calves, giving buyers added confidence in their genetic potential.

Ginette Gottswiller, American Angus Association commercial programs director, answers a few questions and provides insight on how Angus breeders can help customers get the most out of their Angus bull purchase.

## **Q: What's the history of the AngusLink program?**

**A:** In 1999, the Association saw a need to help commercial cattlemen find additional value in their Angus feeder calves. That led to giving commercial producers a place online to list feeder calves, while showcasing the genetics behind them. The website was one of the first of its kind. As that program grew, the Association incorporated a new program called AngusSource, which later included USDA PVPs.

In 2018, the new AngusLink program was added. It enabled the Association to give sets of cattle a score to identify a calf crop's genetic



performance potential, based on our enormous database.

In the fall of 2019, it was decided that AngusSource and AngusLink were to be combined into one program by January 2020. The newly rebranded AngusLink program now allows commercial cattlemen to enroll in PVPs, as well as obtain their optional genetic merit score, all under the convenience of one program.

## **Q: How can AngusLink help seedstock producers?**

**A:** In today's world, commercial producers are looking for ways to separate their calves from the commodity mix. An extra bid or two can mean the difference between a profitable year or losing money.

As an Angus seedstock producer, you want your bull customers to be profitable so they return to buy your bulls year after year. By buying a registered bull from you, they can take advantage of the benefits of the AngusLink program. Many of those commercial producers are already doing the things they need to do to qualify for a PVP program. They are keeping records and have invested in the right genetics from your herd. By


enrolling in AngusLink, when those calves go to market, buyers know they are backed by reputation genetics and are verified. With higher returns on their cattle, those commercial producers will continue to buy your registered Angus bulls and to drive demand for Angus genetics.

## **Q: Who has access to AngusLink?**

**A:** All Angus members have access to the benefits of AngusLink, and so do their customers. Whether you sell a dozen bulls or thousands, your customers can take advantage of AngusLink. Seedstock producers simply need to transfer their bulls to commercial producers so their customers can enroll. Our knowledgeable team gives commercial cattlemen the ease of picking up the phone and talking with representatives who know the cattle business and make them feel a part of the Angus family.

## **Q: What can a seedstock producer do to help their customers and spread the word about AngusLink?**

**A:** If you know one of your customers is looking to add value to their calf crop, recommend the program to them. Any breeder can help spread the word by sharing AngusLink promotional materials with their customers. We have sale

book inserts that help increase awareness of the program or flyers to share at your sale or field day. You can also buy a set of enrollments for your customers to help them see the value in AngusLink. If you'd like to offer an educational program to your customers, Association regional managers or an AngusLink representative can help. Some groups of breeders have worked with a local sale barn to put together a special AngusLink feeder calf sale. We have a sale kit available that helps Angus breeders get started, including print resources and timelines. And, we're always available to answer any questions from Angus breeders or their customers. 

*Editor's note: For more information on AngusLink, visit [www.anguslink.com](http://www.anguslink.com).*

## AngusLink FAQs:

### What is Genetic Merit Scorecard®?

The Genetic Merit Scorecard documents and communicates the genetic potential of calves. The scoring system is a genetic snapshot utilizing the breeding history of a herd into three specific scores. Those scores range from 0 to 200 with 100 representing industry average. The higher the score, the better the genetic potential of the group of calves. The Genetic Merit Scorecard helps feedyard buyers consistently choose cattle that have documented information on performance potential.

The Genetic Merit Scorecard also provides benefits to the commercial producer. It provides tools to benchmark genetic progress and aim for the targets feedyard buyers want.

### Will AngusLink sell calves for me?

We offer a listing service and eBlast that will help you get the word

out that your cattle are for sale and when and where they are selling. The optional Genetic Merit Scoring is also a marketing tool.

### Is there validity in the Genetic Merit Scorecard?

Genetic Merit Scorecard is based on the world's most comprehensive genetic database. By analyzing the bulls a commercial cattleman has used in his herd over the years, the score becomes our best tool available to measure the genetic potential of a group of feeder calves.

### Does AngusLink offer carcass data back to breeders?

Enrolling in AngusLink does not get you data. If you retain ownership through the feedlot or build a relationship with a feeder that data can potentially be accessed.

